

---

## ***THE LITTLE BIG HORN & PINE RIDGE INDIAN CAMPAIGNS***

During the time immediately following the Civil War, our unit remained assigned in the Washington, DC area. During the later half of the 1860's the pressure on the northern plains Indians increased as ranchers, farmers, and miners moved west from the Missouri River and East from California and the Oregon territory. Clashes between Indians and Whites escalated by the day. The Indians realized that the large-scale destruction of game by the Whites would soon mean an end to their way of life. Irregular but intensive warfare developed between the United States and two allied Indian tribes, the Sioux and the Northern Cheyenne. In 1866 and 1867 the Indians, with Red Cloud of the Cheyenne, and Sitting Bull of the Sioux, as their principal chiefs, held their own. A peace commission from Washington went to the plains in late 1867, and in 1868 a treaty was signed at Fort Laramie, in the Wyoming Territory. This treaty appeared to favor the Indians.



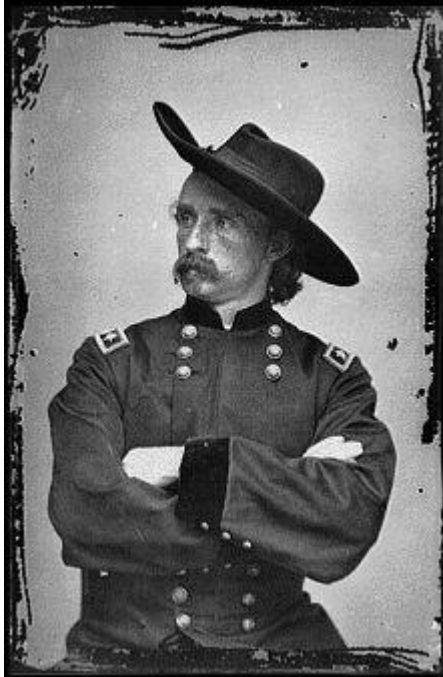
Sitting Bull

The treaty was not long honored. Violations were committed on both sides, and for somewhat the same reason: neither the government nor Red Cloud and the other chiefs could enforce its provisions. The government tried to purchase a part of the Yellowstone River country from the Sioux and Cheyenne, but this attempt failed. At the same time, Indian attacks upon settlers in areas of Nebraska, Minnesota, Wyoming, and Montana, areas lying outside of Indian Territory, were assuming serious proportions.

In 1872, Battery F, 4th Artillery was transferred to Alcatraz Island, California. Our unit spent two years in Sitka, Alaska Territory as part of a rotation of various batteries in the regiment. In 1876, we prepared to return to Alcatraz Island. As the cannoneers of Battery F prepared to move, the United States government sent word to all the non-reservation Sioux and Northern Cheyenne to come in and settle on the reservations or else face punitive expeditions. The deadline for settlement was January 32, 1876. By this date few of the hostels had responded and almost none had complied. Accordingly the project of "disciplining and bringing in the recalcitrant Sioux and Cheyenne" was turned over to the War Department.

Soon after Battery F, 4th Artillery returned to San Francisco, a large expedition under Generals John Gibbon, Alfred Terry, and George Crook moved to comply with orders to force the Sioux and Cheyenne to the reservations. One portion of this force, under General George Armstrong Custer, split into three columns and located the

Indians near the Little Big Horn River in the Montana Territory. The column under Custer was annihilated by the Indians in what became known as "Custer's Last Stand."



**General George Armstrong Custer**

This resulted in the mobilization of our unit. We departed San Francisco on the Northern Pacific Railroad and arrived in Cheyenne, Wyoming on August 23, 1876. We aligned with the 4th Cavalry and helped oversee the disarming of the Sioux Indians. When General Crook organized an expedition along the Powder River in November, our unit accompanied him, and on December 29, 1876, the temperature fell to 40 degrees below zero. Our unit returned to San Francisco in January 1877. The streamer inscribed LITTLE BIG HORN was earned in the campaign, which followed Custer's Last Stand.

In 1878 and 1879 Army forces took the field against various bands of Indians in mountain of the Northwest. In July 1878, our unit was ordered into the field against the Bannock Indians. The Bannock War was caused by white intrusion on the Camas Prairie in Idaho, where camas roots were a prime source of food for the Indians. Our unit returned to Plattsburg, New York, where it was mounted on August 15, 1882, and became a light battery. We moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, after this reorganization was complete. In 1889, Battery F, 4th Artillery was assigned to Fort Riley, Kansas, where we remained for almost a decade, with time out in 1890-1891, when we participated in the Pine Ridge Campaign against the Sioux, our final Indian Campaign, 100 years after our first fights against the American Indians. Our final streamer for Indian Campaigns was embroidered PINE RIDGE.

---

